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Remarks

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's careful study of the pending application and claims.

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner's acknowledgement of Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement filed December 5, 2003.

The claims of the current application result from Applicants' election following a restriction requirement mailed October 29, 2003. The elected claims include 1-27. Claims 28-43 are withdrawn.

In the Claims, the Examiner has rejected Claims 1-3, 6-8, 11, 12, 18, 21-23, 25, and 26 under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Pat. No. 5,811,863 to Rostoker, *et al.* Applicants will also consider Claim 20 rejected since the Examiner specifically considered this claim in the rejection but its number is not included in the list of rejected claims.

The Examiner has objected to Claims 4, 5, 9, 10, 13-17, 19, 24, and 27 as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants respond by canceling Claims 2-3, 6-9, 12-13, 18, and 21-26.

Furthermore, Applicants have rewritten three independent claims to incorporate certain dependent claim elements. Independent Claim 1 is rewritten to incorporate the limitations of Claim 9. Independent Claim 11 is rewritten to incorporate the limitations of Claim 13. Independent Claim 20 is rewritten to incorporate the limitations of Claim 24.

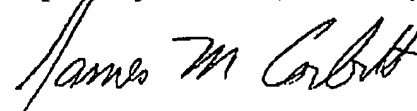
Several dependent claims have been rewritten in independent form to incorporate limitations of certain independent and dependent claims. Claim 4 is rewritten in independent form to incorporate the limitations of Claims 1 and 2. Claim 5 is rewritten in independent form to incorporate the limitations of Claims 1, 2, and 4. Claim 14 is rewritten in independent form to incorporate the limitations of Claims 11 and 13. Claim 16 is rewritten in independent form to incorporate the limitations of Claims 11, 13, and 14.

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Several dependent claims have or have not been amended to depend from amended independent claims. Claim 10 is amended to properly depend from independent Claim 1. Claims 15 and 19 properly depend from amended independent Claim 14. Claim 17 properly depends from amended independent Claim 16. Claim 27 is amended to properly depend from amended independent Claim 20.

Based on the foregoing amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 1, 4, 5, 10, 11, 14-17, 19, 20, and 27 are in condition for immediate allowance and the same is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

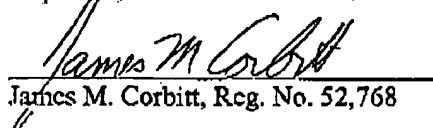


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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that this correspondence is sent by facsimile to the United States Patent and Trademark Office, c/o Technology Center 2800, Art Unit 2812, Attn: Examiner Andre C. Stevenson, at facsimile number 703-872-9318 on April 13, 2004.


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